

MEN AS ALLIES

Workplace Guide

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by Patrick Ford

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The Purpose of This Guide

This guide is intended for graduating, male MBAs who want best practices to make their workplaces more inclusive and equitable.

It's written for men in particular because diversity and inclusion initiatives require broad organizational buy-in to succeed.

More and more, men are recognizing that gender equity in the workplace isn't just a "woman's issue" – it's a business issue. More inclusive workplaces are good for everyone. Inclusive policies often mean more flexible schedules, fairer processes, and clearer expectations for everyone.

When reviewing this guide, please also keep in mind two things. First, many people don't ascribe to a binary of "men" and "women" or have transitioned from their sex assigned at birth. Second, other aspects of identity such as nationality, race, and sexual orientation (among many others) also play a significant role in how people are perceived and treated. This guide focuses on topics and best practices that are backed up by research – and though these studies are extremely valuable, they aren't the whole story.



We've formatted this booklet into three overarching issues:

- **RETENTION & ADVANCEMENT**
- **HIRING PRACTICES**
- **AT HOME**

Within these three sections, we have topics broken down by **Impact on Women**, **Facts**, and **Actions**.

What's at stake?

Why do women, on average, make only 85¢ for every \$1.00 that a man makes for the same work?¹

Why are there more men named John who run companies in the S&P 1500 than all women combined?²

Why do 50% of working women do daily household chores (NOT including childcare) compared to only 20% of men?³



This booklet doesn't cover everything to know about gender equity in the workplace, but it provides a good start. Best practices are constantly evolving. The key is to stay current and continue conversation on this topic: gender equity isn't a checklist to go over once and be done with – it's a set of values and principles that help guide our personal and business decisions. As you graduate and re-enter the workforce with an MBA, you'll have a huge opportunity to make these statistics into relics of the past.

RETENTION & ADVANCEMENT

Sponsorship

FACT

Men and women report professional networks that are similar in size but different in composition. Across more than 30,000 employees from over 100 companies, two in three men indicated that the leaders who have helped them succeed were mostly men, whereas only one in three women indicated the leaders who have helped them were mostly men.⁴ It can be difficult to build and maintain cross-gender mentorship and sponsorship relationships.

ACTION

Take the extra effort to reach out and sponsor a female employee. Helping start an official sponsorship program can also facilitate professional connections between male higher-ups who may be worried about the optics of reaching out to younger, female employees and junior employees who are nervous to ask for support informally.



IMPACT ON WOMEN

Men often have an easier time finding internal career advocates because male managers are often more comfortable informally reaching out to junior male employees than to junior female employees.

"Office Housework"

FACT

Women are viewed more negatively than men when not doing "office housework" tasks⁵ – COO Sheryl Sandberg and Wharton professor Adam Grant write: "When a woman declines to help a colleague, people like her less and her career suffers. But when a man says no, he faces no backlash. A man who doesn't help is 'busy'; a woman is 'selfish.'"

ACTION

Look at the predictable types of "office housework" that come up and create a calendar to share these duties fairly. If you notice a woman on your team cleaning up a room after a meeting, jump in to help. Lastly, start a larger conversation on the topic to generate more awareness.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Women are much more likely to take on administrative tasks that help their company but aren't rewarded professionally. These "office housework" tasks include taking notes, cleaning up after meetings, and getting food. This work is important for smooth office functioning but often unrecognized and undervalued.



Work Flexibility

FACT

Research shows that across seniority levels – from entry level to middle management to senior leadership – professional women are nine times as likely as professional men to report doing childcare and four times as likely to report doing household chores.⁸

ACTION

In your own household, have a conversation with your significant other to discuss sharing chores and child-raising. In the workplace, given the reality of the situation, your company can better recruit and retain female talent by offering flex-time programs – allow flexibility for school drop-offs and pickups; be sensitive to caregiving emergencies that require missing work suddenly; and encourage company leaders to model good behavior by participating in the programs themselves.



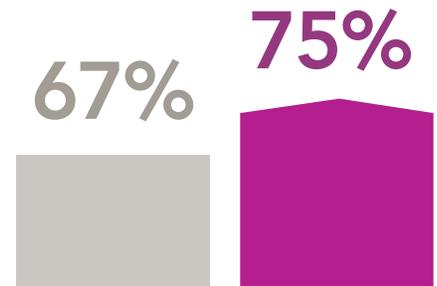
IMPACT ON WOMEN

Currently, women do the vast majority of household chores and child-raising,⁶ and they are expected to do these chores even when working the same amount as their husbands.⁷ In order to fulfill those responsibilities, women often gravitate toward companies that offer flexible work schedules (not necessarily reduced time).

Work Environment

FACT

Complex dynamics create a company culture and quantifying it is tricky. A pew study shows, however, that 67% of all women in the US believe more change is needed for gender equality in the workplace. And the trend is getting worse: this percentage grows to 75% when looking solely at millennial women.¹⁰



ACTION

A quarterly survey asking recipients how they feel about culture and inclusion will provide important data; if done consistently, it will also show changes over time. Ask about barriers to advancement and perceptions of personal career potential – then look at the differential between demographics to assess patterns. This booklet can't exhaustively cover what to do if you discover significant differences, but seek outside help and research best practices relevant to your findings.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Culture plays a huge role in retention of employees, and gender can play a huge role in how someone feels treated at work. For example, the author of a three-year study on why female engineers leave their workplace stated that the main reason is a bad cultural climate.⁹

Feedback

FACT

Based on more than 200 performance reviews at three different companies, performance feedback for women is both less specific and less tied to explicit outcomes than feedback for men. Furthermore, this lack of specificity is correlated with less positive reviews for women (but not correlated in this way for men).¹²

ACTION

Check to make sure you're giving solicited "constructive" feedback that is specific and focuses on growth instead of "personality flaws". It can also be very powerful to share constructive feedback from the perspective of seeing potential and wanting to support them in reaching their goals.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Preliminary studies indicate women are much more likely to be given unconstructive and vague feedback about their personalities than men are. Men are more likely to be given feedback that encourages growth.¹¹



Double Bind

FACT

Men and women are perceived differently for demonstrating very similar behaviors. For example, a woman will be perceived as "bossy" for the same actions that a man would be perceived as "confident". Generally speaking, men are expected to be leaders, whereas women are expected to be nurturing – a quality not often associated with leadership roles in a business environment.¹⁵

ACTION

If perceive a woman as "bossy" or "pushy", try to imagine how you'd feel if a man exhibited the same behavior. You can also encourage conversation that asks colleagues to consider how their unconscious bias is at play. Remember, pinpointing one's own unconscious bias is difficult, almost by definition: it's unconscious. Consider asking others (especially women) for their viewpoints.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Women are less likely than men to be perceived as both likable and competent at the same time¹³ – putting them in the "double bind" of having to choose between these two characteristics. This double bind lowers the likelihood of women being seen as likable leaders and so lowers their chances of receiving promotions, raises, VC backing, and more.¹⁴

HIRING PRACTICES

Resume Screening & Interviews

FACT

In a study conducted at Stanford, two resumes that were almost identical were scored very differently. One of the resumes included just one extra line indicating membership in a Parent-Teacher association (implying motherhood). The two resumes were judged very differently: the “mother” was 79% less likely to be hired.¹⁷

ACTION

Use a pre-determined, quantitative method to score resumes for screening instead of relying on “instincts” that tend to include many of our unconscious biases. For interviews, use a structured interview process; decide a list of desired skills before the interviews; and quantitatively score the interview. When applicable, use a diverse group or panel of interviewers rather than one interviewer by his/herself. Additional supplements such as work-samples can also be very helpful. Note: structured interviews can end up feeling a bit “unnatural”; to get a more personal “feel” for a candidate, simply conduct the unstructured part at the end.

IMPACT ON WOMEN



Moms are 79% less likely to be hired.

When hiring, it is very easy to unconsciously favor job candidates most similar to yourself and disfavor candidates different from yourself (interviewers may also unintentionally associate stereotypes with dissimilar candidates¹⁶). This often puts women and people of color at a disadvantage.

Negotiations



IMPACT ON WOMEN

Women are more negatively penalized for initiating negotiations. As a result, women don't initiate negotiations as often as men.

FACT

In an experiment conducted jointly by professors at Harvard and Carnegie Mellon, 119 people judged how likely they would be to hire hypothetical candidates who had negotiated for higher salary. The experiment showed that the hypothetical “hiring manager” was twice as likely to not hire a woman who negotiated than to not hire a man who negotiated.¹⁸

ACTION

There isn't one simple way to tackle this dynamic. A few clear-cut options are to eliminate salary negotiating altogether or take steps to encourage all candidates to negotiate. You can also take steps to mitigate unconscious bias by reminding negotiators of common biases right before interviews.¹⁹

Salaries

FACT

Based on input from nearly 10,000 MBA graduates from 26 leading business schools across North America, Europe and Asia, the salaries of women MBAs in their first roles after business school were less than that of their male counterparts even after taking into account years of work experience, job level, geography and industry. In addition, the salary differential could not be attributed to either the parental status or professional aspirations of the MBA cohort.²⁰

ACTION

Encourage your company to conduct its own internal review for potential salary gaps and base job salaries for new and experienced hires on internal benchmarks, not on their past job salaries. Salesforce went so far as spending \$3 million when it found it had such a pay gap – actually they did it twice as they kept acquiring new companies with wage gaps.²¹



IMPACT ON WOMEN

Women make less money on average than men for doing the same job due to discrepancies in negotiating, unconscious bias, and outright sexism. Additionally, using someone's previous salary at a different company to determine their salary at a new one reinforces the pay gap and has a lifetime cumulative effect.

Candidate Selection

FACT

The NFL adopted the "Rooney" rule in 2003: a team must interview at least one minority candidate for top coaching and management positions. Several companies have initiated a form of this rule, including Facebook, Pinterest, Intel, Xerox, and Amazon.²² Note: there is a danger of executing this rule carelessly. Former NFL head coach Tony Dungy said that this NFL rule "has become, 'Just let me talk to a couple minority coaches very quickly so I can go about the business of hiring the person I really want to hire anyway.'"²³

ACTION

Despite the possible flaws in the rule, the "Rooney" rule can still serve as an effective policy when executed faithfully. Require your company's hiring managers to include women in the candidate pools and execute position searches in tandem with interview best practices. All of this also applies to succession planning – remember to include female candidates when planning the company's future.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

A gender imbalance in the initial candidate pool for an open position can have a huge effect on who gets hired. This increases the gender balance discrepancy throughout an organization.

AT HOME

Paternity Leave

FACT

Men who share equally in the care of their children become enablers for their spouse's career success – not to mention the fulfillment of spending time with their children. Millennial fathers who shared child care with their partners reported greater work-life ease and greater satisfaction with their lives than men whose partners did most of the caregiving.²⁴

ACTION

Take paternity leave, share your story of it, and encourage your colleagues, managers, and subordinates to take it as well. Help make paternity leave a social norm for men. Paternity leave policies are most successful when company leadership sets a good example by utilizing these programs themselves.



IMPACT ON WOMEN

A big reason why there is a large pay differential between men and women is that men are more likely to focus time on work while women invest time in raising children. Taking paternity leave not only gives men extra time with family during an important life stage, but also reduces the burden of childcare for women so they have the opportunity to focus on their careers. And taking paternity leave is for any man becoming a father, regardless of sexual orientation.

Caregiving for Elderly Parents

FACT

Studies show that as women care for their elderly parents, they also tend to give up their careers to do so. To offset this important work, some companies offer paid leave for elder care, including Deloitte and Nike.²⁶

ACTION

Have conversations with your sister, wife, and other female family members about who will take primary care of elderly parents. Proactively focus on what role you can take to assist in caring for elderly family members. If you cannot help out directly, consider paying the family member who takes on the primary caregiving, and when that person eventually re-enters the workforce, help them get back on track with their career.

IMPACT ON WOMEN

Women are much more likely to become primary caregivers for their elderly parents, and caregiving can easily take someone off their career path.²⁵



The Second Shift



IMPACT ON WOMEN

When a working person (mostly referring to a woman) comes home and then continues to do many household chores, it's called the "second shift". Doing the "second shift" means less time for career and less time to refresh before heading back into work.



Mothers who work full-time still do a full 10 days of chores more than their male partners annually.²⁷



In most cases, unless couples actively work against default gender roles, they tend to fall back into them. Create a list of all your common domestic duties (car repair, scheduling appointments, buying gifts, doing laundry, etc) and then discuss how you plan to share these duties. Repeat this conversation every so often – ongoing check-ins are vital to successful sharing of duties. Finally, if you plan to have kids, discuss how your work, chore-sharing, and day-to-day lives will be affected.

Sources



For links to all our sources in the booklet, please go to mbaallies.com/sources

In partnership with the MBA Allies network schools:

Carnegie Mellon Tepper, Tepper Women in Business - *Male Allies*

Columbia Business School, Columbia Women in Business - *Manbassadors*

Dartmouth Tuck, Women in Business - *Male Ambassador*

Duke Fuqua, Association of Women in Business - *Male Allies Program*

Georgetown McDonough School of Business, Georgetown Women in Business
- *Men as Allies*

Harvard Business School - *Manbassadors*

MIT Sloan, Sloan Women in Management - *Male Allies*

NYU Stern, Stern Women in Business - *Male Allies*

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UC Berkeley Haas, Women in Leadership - *Manbassadors*

UCLA Anderson, Women's Business Connection - *Manbassadors*

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Common Chromosome

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Vanderbilt Owen, Women's Business Association - *Manbassadors*

The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania,
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